

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 3-5 and 8-12 have been canceled. Claim 13 is currently being amended. New claims 14-16 are currently being added.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 13-16 are now pending in this application.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. In response, claim 13 has been amended for clarity and to correct antecedent basis problems. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and claim 13 be allowed.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Publication No. 7-76438 ("Japan '438"). In response, without agreeing or acquiescing to the rejection, Applicants cancel claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 11 and 12 making this rejection moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japan '438 in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,102,393 ("Kida et al."). In response, without

agreeing or acquiescing to the rejection, Applicants cancel claims 5 and 10 making this rejection moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 13

Claim 13 is directed toward a sheet feeding method comprising the steps of supplying a special sheet and an ordinary sheet on a manual sheet supply tray, aligning leading edges of the special sheet and the ordinary sheet, controlling and guiding the special sheet, by way of a singular sheet guide provided between the manual sheet supply tray and the aligning rollers, the singular sheet guide having special sheet ribs to control both sides of the special sheet for guiding the ordinary sheet by passing the ordinary sheet on upper surfaces of the special sheet ribs, the singular sheet guide further having a pressing member provided between the special sheet ribs and preventing the bending of the central portion of the ordinary sheet by pressing the back of the central portion of the ordinary sheet with elastic force by way of the pressing member and wherein the pressing member descends by an empty weight of the special sheet when the special sheet is inserted between the special sheet ribs.

Applicants respectfully submit that the references cited in the Office Action do not disclose, teach or suggest each and every limitation of claim 13. Specifically, Japan '438 fails to teach or disclose controlling and guiding a special sheet with a singular sheet guide having special sheet ribs and a pressing member, and "preventing the bending of the central portion of the ordinary sheet by pressing the back of the central portion of the ordinary sheet with elastic force by way of the pressing member and wherein the pressing member descends by an empty weight of the special sheet when the special sheet is inserted between the special sheet ribs" as claimed in claim 13. Further, Kida et al. fails to cure these deficiencies.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 13 is allowable.

New Claims

Claims 14-16 have been added to further define the invention. Support for claims 14-16 can be found at least on pages 4-9 of the specification. Claims 14-16 depend from independent claim 13 and are therefore allowable for the reasons set forth above without

regard to further patentable limitations recited therein. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that claims 14-16 be allowed.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date January 18, 2007

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 22428
Telephone: (202) 945-6162
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

By  Reg No. 59,396

Pavan K. Agarwal
Registration No. 40,888
W. Keith Robinson
Registration No. 59,396
Attorneys for Applicants